WHAT IS CLAIMED IS:

1. A liquid composition for providing restored or maintained colon functionality comprising an effective amount of a non-digestible oligosaccharide, at least one green tea catechin and a buffering agent mixture, said liquid composition being in a pH range of from about 4.7 to about 5.0.

2. A liquid composition for preventing cancer comprising an effective amount of a non-digestible oligosaccharide, at least one green tea catechin and a buffering agent mixture, said liquid composition being in a pH range of from about 4.7 to about 5.0.

3. The liquid composition of claim 1 or 2, characterised in that the non-digestible oligosaccharide is chosen from the group consisting of xylo-oligosaccharides, soyoligosaccharides, fructo-oligosaccharides, trans-galacto-oligosaccharides, palatinose condensates, isomalto-oligosaccharides, inulin, pyrodextrin, and mixtures thereof.

4. The liquid composition of claim 1 or 2, characterised in that the non-digestible oligosaccharide is chosen from the group consisting of oligofructose, short chain fructo-oligosaccharides, and mixtures thereof.

5. The liquid composition of claim 3, characterised in that the fructo-oligosaccharide is chosen from the group consisting of short-chain fructo-oligosaccharides, and mixtures thereof .

6. The liquid composition of claim 4 or 5, characterised in that the short-chain fructo-oligosaccharide has a maximum degree of polymerisation (DP) of 4.

7. The liquid composition of any one of claims 1 to 6, characterised in that the non-digestible oligosaccharide is at a concentration of about 3% to about 45% by weight.

8. The liquid composition of any one of claims 1 to 7, characterised in that the at least one green tea catechin is selected from the group consisting of epicatechin (EC), epigallocatechin (EGC), epicatechin gallate (ECG) and epigallocatechin gallate (EGCG), and mixtures thereof.

9. The liquid composition of claims 8, characterised in that the at least one green tea catechin is epigallocatechin gallate (EGCG).

10. The liquid composition of claim 9, characterised in that the epigallocatechin gallate (EGCG) is at a concentration of from about 0.1 to about 0.8% by weight.

11. The liquid composition of any one of claims 8 to 10, characterised in that the epigallocatechin gallate (EGCG) is derived from a decaffeinated green tea plant extract having an EGCG content of from about 25 to about 99 % by weight.

12. The liquid composition of any one of claims 8 to 11, characterised in that it further comprises an antioxidant chosen from the group consisting of water-soluble or water-dispersible oxygen scavenging agents , and mixtures thereof.

13. The liquid composition of claim 12, characterised in that the oxygen or free radical scavenging agent is selected from the group consisting of butylated hydroxytoluene (BHT), butylated hydroxyanisole (BHA), tocopherols, ascorbic acid, ascorbic acid salts, anthocyandins from fruit juice powder, anthocyandins from fruit juice concentrate, anthocyandins from vegetable juice powder, anthocyandins from vegetable juice concentrate, and mixtures thereof.

14. The liquid composition of claim 13, characterised in that the oxygen or free radical scavenging agent consists of ascorbic acid and anthocyandins from berry juice powders.

15. The liquid composition of any one of claims 12 to 14, characterised in that the antioxidant is at a concentration of from about 0.1% to about 5% by weight.

16. The liquid composition of any one of claims 12 to 15, characterised in that it further comprises a trace metal ion scavenger.

17. The liquid composition of 16, characterised in that the trace metal ion scavenger is selected from group consisting of ethylene diamine tetracetic acid (EDTA) and salts thereof, and mixtures thereof.

18. The liquid composition of claim 16 or 17, characterised in that the trace metal ion scavenger is at a concentration of from about 0.05% to about 0.25% by weight.

19. The liquid composition of any one of claims 16 to 18, characterised in that the buffering agent mixture selected from group consisting of citrates, phosphates, acetates, ascorbates, and mixtures thereof.

20. The liquid composition of claim 19, characterised in that the buffering mixture comprises sodium citrate and citric acid.

21. The liquid composition of claim 19 or 20, characterised in that the buffering agent mixture is at a concentration of from about 0.1% to about 2% by weight.

22. A method of restoring and maintaining colon functionality in a human being, said method comprising administering to said human being an effective amount of a liquid composition of any one of claims 1 to 21 to restore and maintain colon functionality in said human being.

23. A method of helping prevent cancer in a human being, said method comprising administering to said human being an effective amount of a liquid composition of any one of claims 1 to 21 to help prevent cancer in said human being.

24. Use of an effective amount of a liquid composition of any one of claims 1 to 21 to restore and maintain colon functionality in a human being.

25. Use of an effective amount of a liquid composition of any one of claims 1 to 21 to help prevent cancer in a human being.

26. Use of an effective amount of a liquid composition of any one of claims 1 to 21 for the manufacture of a medicament useful for restoring or maintaining colon functionality in a human being.

27. Use of an effective amount of a liquid composition of any one of claims 1 to 21 for the manufacture of a medicament useful for in helping to prevent cancer in a human being.

28. A method for increasing the stability of short-chain fructo-oligosaccharides and epigallocatechin gallate (EGCG) in liquid compositions comprising the steps of:

a) buffering the said liquid with sodium citrate and citric acid in a pH range of from about 4.70 to about 5.0 and a minimum buffer capacity of 50 mM;
b) adding to the said liquid an oxygen scavenging agent to compete for removal of dissolved oxygen; and
c) adding a trace metal ion scavenger to remove trace metal ions.

29. The method according to claim 28, characterised in that it further comprises the steps of:

d) filling to neck or shoulder level in amber glass or PET container; and
e) blanketing container headspace prior to capping said container.

30. The method according to claim 28 or 29, characterised in that the liquid composition is the liquid composition of any one of claims 3 to 21.